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# COOPERATION WITH RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

## Progress report on cooperation with international organizations

## Note by the secretariat

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# I. INTRODUCTION

## A. Mandate

1. By its decision 7/CP.3, the Conference of the Parties (COP) invited the subsidiary bodies of the Convention, in particular the Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA), to continue their cooperation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

2. By its decision 8/CP.3, the third session of the COP urged Parties to provide the necessary resources to reverse the decline in the existing observational networks and to support the global and regional observational systems being developed. It requested the SBSTA, with the assistance of the secretariat and in consultation with the IPCC, to consider the adequacy of the global observational systems, namely, the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS) and the Global Terrestrial System (GTOS), and to report on its conclusions to the COP at its fourth session (FCCC/CP/1997/7/Add.1).

3. At its fifth session, the SBSTA noted that Articles 4.1(g) and 5 of the Convention are broader than the Climate Agenda and requested the secretariat to explore the situation with respect to other areas of research, observation and data processing and to report, as appropriate, to future sessions of the SBSTA (FCCC/SBSTA/1997/4).

## B. Scope of the paper

4. Further to the above request, and in consultation with the Interagency Committee on the Climate Agenda (IACCA) and the IPCC, this paper provides information on activities relevant to the above mandates.

## C. Possible action by the SBSTA

5. The SBSTA may wish to:

(a) Take note of the information provided in this progress report;

(b) Encourage the secretariat to continue, maintain and strengthen its collaborative liaison with the relevant organizations; and

(c) Invite the organizations participating in the Climate Agenda to complete the comprehensive report on the observational networks of the climate system for presentation at its ninth session and, as appropriate, provide any additional guidance on this topic.

## II. DISCUSSION

### A. Cooperation with the organizations participating in the Climate Agenda regarding observational networks

6. The secretariat has coordinated with several international organizations and programmes active in the areas of systematic observation and research related to the climate system. These included, *inter alia*, the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO/IOC), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other international organizations and programmes participating in the Climate Agenda.

7. At COP 3, the secretariat organized an informal meeting with the representatives of relevant organizations. The meeting reviewed the conclusions, decisions and requests of the SBSTA and the COP that are relevant to international organizations. The meeting concluded that a comprehensive report examining the adequacy of observational networks, identifying the existing gaps and quantifying the financial and human resources required, should be prepared for the ninth session of the SBSTA. It was agreed that the IACCA, in cooperation with its member organizations, would take the lead in the preparation of the report. The organizations and programmes participating in the Climate Agenda and other organizations, including the IPCC, would contribute to the preparation of the comprehensive report. A report on the status of its preparation of the comprehensive report will be presented to the eighth session of the SBSTA.

8. The comprehensive report will seek to satisfy three objectives:

(a) Recall the commitments of the Parties to the Convention with regard to essential systematic observations as provided for under Articles 4.1(g) and 5 of the Convention;

(b) Review and consider the adequacy of the existing and planned observational systems as requested by decision 8/CP.3; and

(c) Identify issues for consideration by the SBSTA at its ninth session and, as appropriate, at the fourth session of the COP.

9. The report will review key issues related to climate change. It is likely to note that:

(a) Many observations are being collected by systems designated for other purposes and often lack the consistency required for climate applications;

(b) Many observational systems are deteriorating in their spatial coverage and/or their accuracy; and

(c) Many observational data are not being shared effectively.

10. In addition, the report would identify possible global networks capable of providing the necessary homogeneous and stable observations, together with the estimated resource implications, as well as requirements for capacity building.

## B. Cooperation with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

11. The IPCC is undertaking a number of activities that are relevant to the work of the Convention, as discussed below.

### 1. Special report on emission scenarios

12. The main objective of the special report on emission scenarios is to review the literature and, based on the outcome, formulate a new set of scenarios to replace the six IPCC IS92 scenarios that are widely used as reference emissions trajectories. The preparation of the report includes an "open" process whereby scenarios developed by the writing team will be posted on a web site, and regional and global modelling groups will be invited to submit their own scenarios.

13. To date, a review of existing global and regional emission scenarios has been carried out, a database of more than 400 scenarios has been assembled and the process of statistical analysis of the scenarios in the database is under way. The development of an initial set of emission scenarios began with the formulation of narrative "storylines" to be used in defining the quantitative characteristics of initial scenarios. In January 1998, four modelling groups started to formulate the initial scenarios and to test them with their models for consistency in terms of both qualitative and quantitative factors by using models.

14. The "open" process described above will begin in May 1998. The comments of the outside modelling groups will be considered and the scenarios will be revised as appropriate. These will then be submitted for peer review in May 1999.

### 2. Special report on methodological and technological issues in technology transfer

15. The special report on methodological and technological issues in technology transfer will identify, describe and assess the potential effectiveness of options to accelerate the development and diffusion of technology for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. The report will make extensive use of case studies to illustrate lessons learned from experience with a variety of arrangements. As many important sources of information on technology transfer are now available in the peer-reviewed literature, a methodology will be devised to use these sources, including listing them on an IPCC web site and making them available to the public from the IPCC Secretariat and the appropriate technical support unit.

16. Lead authors have been selected and drafts are currently being prepared. A review by experts will take place between October and November 1998, followed by the first government review between February and April 1999. The report is expected to be available by October 1999.

### 3. Special report on aviation and the global atmosphere

17. The special report on aviation and the global atmosphere will assess the state of understanding of relevant atmospheric science, aviation technology (including subsonic and supersonic aircraft) and socio-economic issues. The effects that aviation has had in the past and may have in the future on both global climate change and stratospheric ozone layer depletion will be covered. The report will include discussions of current aviation technology and its projected improvements, as well as socio-economic aspects of aviation. Lastly, the assessment will synthesize the scientific, technological and socio-economic information and will identify and describe potential options regarding future aviation impacts on the atmosphere.

18. The report, particularly its chapters on aircraft technology, current and future scenarios and air transport operations, is being prepared with the involvement of the aviation industry.

19. A review by experts will take place during April and May 1998, followed by the first government review during August and September 1998. The report is expected to be completed between March and April 1999.

### 4. Third Assessment Report

20. The Third Assessment Report (TAR) will be comprehensive and will cover the complete range of scientific, technical and economic issues associated with the climate system and climate change deemed important by the scientific or policy-making communities. The TAR will summarize the state of knowledge covered in previous IPCC reports but will primarily assess information generated since the Second Assessment Report, recognizing that climate change is a global issue. It will also emphasize the assessment of the regional aspects of climate change. It will consist of reports of the three IPCC working groups and a synthesis report. The synthesis report will be written in a non-technical style suitable for policymakers and will address a broad range of key policy-relevant questions.

21. The process of selecting lead authors, contributing authors and review editors has begun. The Bureaux of the three IPCC working groups met in March 1998 to identify experts, many of whom, it is expected, will play an important role in the drafting of the three working group reports. The first meeting involving these experts will be held from 29 June to 1 July 1998 during which the structure and content of each chapter will be planned and the process for selecting lead author teams will be advanced. The structure and contents of the reports will be proposed for adoption at the IPCC Plenary meeting scheduled for 1-3 October 1998, by which time it is expected that the lead author teams will be complete, subject to minor amendments.

22. Chapter teams will begin drafting the report in late 1998/early 1999. The three working group reports will each undergo, in turn, expert and government reviews during the year 2000. The reports are expected to be completed by late 2000 or early 2001.

5. Task group on climate scenarios for impact assessment

23. The IPCC has also formed a task group on climate scenarios for impact assessment to facilitate cooperation and promote collaboration between the climate modelling and impacts communities. It will address the availability and accessibility of climate scenarios and other data for use in impact studies and assessments.

24. A Data Distribution Centre to facilitate the timely distribution of consistent sets of up-to-date scenarios of changes in climate and related environmental and socio-economic factors is expected to become fully operational in July 1998 after a trial period beginning in April 1998. In addition, guidance material is being prepared on the provision, application, and interpretation of climate scenarios. Also, there are plans to develop a training programme on the use of these projections.

## C. Cooperation with other organizations

25. The secretariat has continued to coordinate with the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) in relation to emissions of greenhouse gases from aviation and marine bunker fuels. The secretariat has written to ICAO and IMO to draw their attention to the relevant decisions of the COP at its third session, particularly decision 2/CP.3 on methodological issues related to the Kyoto Protocol and Article 2.2 of the Protocol. The secretariat noted that although it may take some time before the Kyoto Protocol enters into force, it may be prudent to explore what anticipatory action might be appropriate to respond to Article 2.2 of the Protocol.

26. After consultations with the Chairman of the SBSTA, the secretariat also contacted the International Human Dimension Programme of Global Environmental Change and the International Geosphere and Biosphere Programme to explore areas of cooperation and, as appropriate, to invite them to provide information on their activities to the SBSTA.

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